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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, October 28, 1932.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "A Hallowe'en Dinner." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics,
U.S.D.A.

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"For the most fun at the lowest cost, for inexpensive merrymaking of the easy, pleasant friendly kind, no other holiday compares to Hallowe'en." That's what my Next-Door Neighbor says and that's why she always plans some sort of a frolic at her house on the thirtieth of October. As she says, this is a fine time for grown-up parties and an equally fine time for children's frolics. What youngster doesn't get a thrill out of all the mystery and spooky customs of this day and what youngster doesn't enjoy imagining that ghosts and goblins are abroad and witches are riding on broomsticks?

Did you know that Hallowe'en is one of our oldest celebrations--older even than Christmas, New Years, Easter and so on? The Hallowe'en tradition comes down to us from the Harvest festival of the ancient Druids, who light a great altar fire in every one of their villages on this date to protect themselves against evil spirits. Each family then took a coal from this altar fire for its own hearthfire, as a protection against all evil during the coming year.

When the Druids became Christians they changed this day into a Christian festival, called All Hallow Eve. But, just the same, superstitious folk, down through the years continued to believe that on All Hallow Eve the elves and goblins came out to dance and bad spirits gathered in deserted dwellings to plot against mankind.

Well, as we said, Hallowe'en is one of the best of times for entertaining your friends, for drawing around the fire and playing games or cracking nuts. And Hallowe'en is a fine time for family get-togethers. People of all ages enjoy games like doughnuts-on-a-string or spooks-in-the-corner. Forget elaborate and expensive preparations, forget long formal course dinners and other things that mean time, work and expense. This is the time for bountiful but easy dinners served to a merry crowd of guests. For decorations for the house or the table, nature is very generous at this season. Autumn leaves, pumpkins and other fall vegetables, apples, grapes and other fall fruits--any of these make handsome centerpieces for your table. In general black and orange is the color scheme you follow in Hallowe'en decorations, just as red and green are the traditional Christmas colors.

That reminds me of a very handsome Black and orange Hallowe'en cake I saw last year--a chocolate and orange layer cake. Chocolate frosting between the layers. Orange frosting on top. Decorations for the frosting were bits of shaved chocolate and grated orange rind sprinkled on.

For children's parties apples made to look like Jack-o-lanterns, and cookies in the shape of black cats are fun. With a little imagination you can fix up all sorts of clever favors and decorations with just the simple materials you have on hand.

But I'm wandering from the main subject, which is a Hallowe'en dinner party, carefully planned for you by your two friends, the Menu Specialist and the Recipe Lady. I'll give you the complete menu first and then we'll discuss various items of it. Of course, the color scheme for the meal is black and orange.

All ready to write the menu? Baked ham with cider and raisin sauce; Baked potatoes on the half shell, browned in the oven; Buttered carrots; Black and orange salad made of lettuce, prunes stuffed with nuts and canned apricots. For dessert, that old favorite, pumpkin pie.

Because this is a party, let's have that pie with a few fixin's--whipped cream or tart jelly on top--or both. Then coffee, of course, and black and orange candies.

Since the ham is an important item on the menu, maybe we'd better review in our minds just how to fix a baked ham to perfection. Suppose that you have a whole ham to bake. Wash and scrape it thoroughly and soak it overnight in a large pan with cold water to cover it. In the morning, wipe the ham dry. Place the ham, rind side up, on a rack in an open pan. Don't add water and don't cover the ham. Bake it in a slow oven (260 degrees F.). Between 25 and 30 minutes to the pound is what you'll allow for the baking time of a whole ham. When it is done, remove the rind, and return the ham to the oven long enough to brown the fat.

Of course, you can do a more perfect job of roasting ham or any other meat if you own and use a meat thermometer. If you have the leaflet on cooking cured pork, you have on the second page all the directions for roasting a ham with a thermometer.

Now for the cider and raisin sauce. You'll need seven ingredients:

1/4 cup of sugar	1/4 cup of seedless raisins
1 tablespoon of cornstarch	4 small pieces of stick cinnamon, and
1/8 teaspoon of salt	8 whole cloves
1 cup of cider	

Did you get all those? (Repeat)

Mix the sugar, cornstarch, and salt. Add the cider and raisins. Put in the spices tied up in a piece of cheesecloth. Boil the mixture for about 10 minutes and take out the spices. Serve the sauce hot with ham.

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Monday - "Good Ways to Use Onions", and another economy menu.

